

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

1. The Citizens Committee for a Free Cuba was established a few weeks ago, and started publishing a newsletter on 4 May 1963, and has been getting favorable publicity in editorials and in Congressional comments. Its original membership list, announced early in May, is a distinguished group of 44 American leaders of business, military, governmental, and academic life, of various political and religious persuasions.

2. Its "declaration of purpose," issued on 25 March 1963, calls for nonpartisan unity in a movement for a free Cuba. Daniel James has been a foreign correspondent and is the author of "Cuba: The First Soviet Satellite in the Americas." Mr. James is the editor of the newsletter, "Free Cuba News;" and a Mr. Pake (spelling?) is also said to be connected with the newsletter.

3. The files contain clippings of recent publicity by and about the Committee, including its declaration of purpose, its membership list, and favorable news stories and comment by the NEW YORK TIMES (May 6), Lyle C. Wilson in the WASHINGTON NEWS (May 8), the CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR, and Senator Dodd in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, 7 May 1963.

STAT

23 May 1963

FREE CUBA NEWS

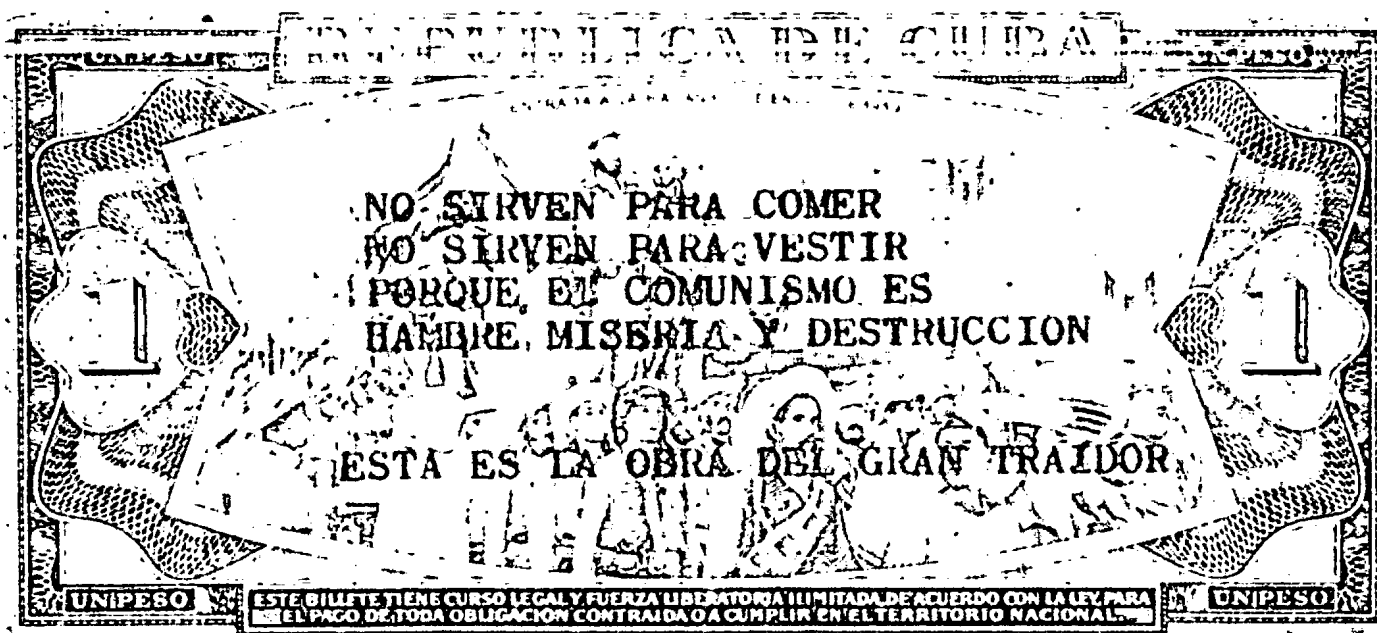
PUBLISHED BY CITIZENS COMMITTEE FOR A FREE CUBA

Telephone 783-7507 • 617 Albee Building, 1426 G Street, N.W. • Washington 5, D. C.

Editor: Daniel James

Vol. 1, No. 2, May 11, 1963

INSIDE CUBA



Cuban banknotes carrying printed statements that they are worthless is the latest weapon of the underground fight against Castro inside Cuba. Above, a sample note valued at one peso, obtained by Free Cuba News from underground sources. The Spanish phrases read:

"VALUELESS FOR FOOD

"VALUELESS FOR CLOTHING

"BECAUSE COMMUNISM IS HUNGER MISERY AND DESTRUCTION

"THIS IS THE WORK OF THE GREAT TRAITOR"

Circulating in Cuba, in unknown quantities, the "anti-Castro peso" presents holders with a dilemma. If they try to cash it at the bank, they risk being accused of collaborating with the resistance. If they attempt to pass it on, they do collaborate. If they hide or destroy it, they take the loss.

#####

RUSSIANS CLASH WITH CUBAN PATRIOTS

First word of an armed conflict between Soviet forces in Cuba and native anti-Castro guerrillas has just reached Free Cuba News from one of the guerrillas, Miguel Velasquez. Velasquez arrived in Miami following a dramatic escape from Cuba. Free Cuba News has verified the story through other sources.

Velasquez adds that, following the armed encounter, 12 guerrillas were captured and tried by a military court which included a Soviet Army officer. The young Cuban was active in the underground in Oriente, and after the capture of the guerrillas his cell folded and he fled to Matanzas and from there to Miami.

Here is the story as told to a Free Cuba News correspondent:

"The group I belonged to was one of many operating in the hills of Oriente. Our operations plan was simple. On the morning of March 26, a large band of us attacked the garrison guarding the Nicaro mines which are now being operated 24 hours a day for the benefit of the Russians."

The Nicaro mines, formerly owned by the U. S. Government, are located on the north coast of Oriente Province and produce considerable nickel and cobalt.

"Our assault was a surprise," Velasquez continued, "and we succeeded in wounding six mine guards and killing two others. Our force withdrew successfully, but while doing so we were attacked by a group of Russian soldiers acting as mine guards. Two Russians and four guerrillas were killed, while 12 guerrillas including our commander, Armando Govea, were captured."

Other sources confirm the deaths of the two Russians.

The captured anti-Castro patriots were subsequently tried at Mayari, Oriente, the municipal subdivision under which the Nicaro mines come. "A Russian officer," according to Velasquez, "took part in the drumhead court which summarily condemned the 12 prisoners." He concluded:

"They were shot near the mines and buried there in an attempt to conceal the executions."

#

SOVIET TROOPS "ROTATED"

Proof that some Soviet forces allegedly departing from Cuba are, in fact, promptly "rotated" back, has been received by Free Cuba News from sources inside Cuba.

In one case, Russian personnel embarked supposedly for home from the port of Isabela de Sagua on the north coast of Cuba were landed shortly thereafter at the southeast

port of Santiago. The Cuban underground learned of this maneuver through letters written by the Russians to girl friends they left behind in Sagua.

As a rule, the Russians embark during the day so they can be thoroughly photographed by U. S. planes. They return to other ports by night.

Another tactic used to evade U. S. detection, says the underground, is to hide out in specially constructed caves converted into barracks. Several such underground installations are located at Suset farm at Kilometer 4 on the road to Cayajabos in Pinar del Rio province.

#

RAUL ADMITS PASSIVE RESISTANCE

The following excerpts from Raul Castro's May Day speech in Havana indicate the great concern of the Castro-Communist regime with the apathy and passive resistance of the Cuban people:

"... if you want to have glory in the battle of production, you must study the way in which glory is achieved in this combat — by applying oneself to one's work in the strictest sense, by submitting oneself to the directors of production and to reaching the standards that they [directors] have established; by fulfilling the goals that have been laid out for you [the workers]...."

"... our Revolutionary CTC [Congress of Cuban Workers] labor unions, all sections of labor, must enhance the role that they have been playing to date; without reducing what has been already accomplished; without minimizing the gains; without neglecting to point out that there are admirable examples. Let us demand that they do more, that they combat the signs of narrow Communism [comunismo estrecho] that still creep up now and then, here and there. That they [workers] make one final effort to eradicate absenteeism, laziness, vagrancy and lack of discipline that we find today among some...."

#

SABOTEURS CAUSE TRAIN WRECKS

In the space of less than three months — from December 28 through the middle of February — Cuban saboteurs caused three major train wrecks. They occurred in Las Villas, Matanzas, and Pinar del Rio provinces.

Workers at sugar mills did their share, as well. In checking the falling sugar production, INRA headquarters "noted" the extraordinary number of accidents with locomotives. Sugar Central Josefita in Havana province radioed that it had only one locomotive in operation. "The other," said the radio operator, "had been derailed." INRA headquarters asked for a full explanation and dispatched an inspector to the mill to investigate, stating that "there is not an extra locomotive in all of Cuba."

in a three-week period from the end of February to the middle of March, a rash of reports sent to INRA in Havana told of locomotives being derailed at sugar mills. Sugar Central Mercedes in Mantanzas Province reported on Feb. 27 that "a train had been derailed while transporting cane to the mill."

On March 9, the Cuban Government revealed that another train wreck had taken place near Ciego de Avila, Camaguey province. The engineer of one of the trains and several others were killed in the crash. The Government announced that the balance of the train crews "have been detained by agents of public order."

In February, the radio operator of the provincial delegation of sugar mills for Camaguey radioed Havana that "the people most against us are those at the sugar mill of San Francisco." On March 20, the head of the sugar mills for the province stated that "anti-government groups spread the rails of the lines at the sugar mill of San Francisco, causing the derailment of two trains."

The steamer Atel Sultan was scheduled to take on 1,100,000 gallons of molasses. Only 500,000 could be loaded, "due to the lack of prime movers for the tank cars (evidently diesel locomotives) to transport the cargo."

#

GUERRILLA REPORTS FROM TWO PROVINCES

Anti-Castro guerrillas continue to be active in Cuba. Here is the latest information from two provinces, gathered by Free Cuba News from sources inside Cuba:

1. Las Villas. About Apr. 10, Armed Forces Minister Raul Castro led 4,500 soldiers into the Escambray mountains to exterminate guerrilla forces there. The guerrillas tried to avoid contact, breaking up into groups of 4, but an encounter nevertheless occurred on or about Apr. 18, near a place called Palmarejo, between Caracusey and San Pedro.

The guerrillas in that area are said to total 250. Sustained by peasants, they lack adequate arms and food, and receive no help from outside.

2. Matanzas. "Rescate," one of the larger resistance groups, reportedly has organized a guerrilla body in this province under the name of "Conde." In March, 19 of its members clashed with more than 1,000 militiamen near Cardenas, where rioting broke out last year. Casualties: more than 30 militiamen injured; 11 guerrillas killed. The remaining 8 escaped with the help of a local resident.

(Ed. Note: As Free Cuba News went to press, we received information from inside Cuba that more than 2,000 people have been rounded up and detained in the provinces of Las Villas and Matanzas.)

#

LETTERS DESCRIBE LIFE IN CUBA

From dozens of letters written by ordinary Cubans living in Cuba, Free Cuba News has culled typical excerpts describing how they are faring under Communist rule. All the letters excerpted were written last month, and the most recent was dated Apr. 26.

Writes "Jose," a worker in the Havana suburb of Cerro:

"It is certainly true that there is no exploitation of one man by another, as the Communists put it. Now we have the exploitation of all men, and it is exploitation by the government. Life has never been so hard."

"Jose" continues:

"They have us cutting cane, harvesting peanuts, coffee and cotton by day, and training in the militia by night. But in one respect we are the richest country in the world: we have more trenches here than anywhere else. That is all the Communist know how to produce."

Another Havana worker writes:

"You really should not call this Cuba or Castroland -- it is Nothingland. There is nothing at all left, neither food, nor clothes, nor shelter. But we do have one thing -- men in uniform. The soldiers, police, militia, spies, vigilantes and even the firemen all wear the same olive green."

Food is scarce everywhere. Writes "Juan," a member of a resistance cell in the Cuban capital.

"My chickens -- according to my ration book I get two every month -- have not appeared since January 2. Eggs cost 20 to 25 cents apiece. I am entitled to ten a month but since January I have been able to obtain only five."

"Pedro" reports from another Havana district:

"You don't see shoes. People wear carpet slippers and wooden clogs in the streets. There is nothing left here now -- not even shame, for the Communists have none."

Letters from all over Cuba speak of resistance to the regime. One smuggled out of Las Villas, reveals:

"Several days ago a group of anti-Communist destroyed an entire crop of onions, leaving a sign reading, 'This is really voluntary labor.' [An allusion to the government's inability to get voluntary work out of the Cuban people.] Please try to help them, for they are brave men doing a great job of sabotaging government installations. The Communists are using planes manned by Russian pilots to strafe their hideouts in the mountains."

A construction worker in Santiago, Cuba's second city, at the eastern end of the island, writes of how he and friends try to help the guerrillas by engaging in sabotage:

"The Communists are building a new electric plant near the oil refinery here and we workers are doing out best to delay the work as much as possible and do as faulty a job as possible."

Other resistance workers ask for arms. From "Somewhere in Cuba," one writes:

"I am a brother of Captain Gonzalez, who has taken up arms against Castro's Russian Cubans. We are living in the mountains, lacking food, weapons, and especially live phosphorus, which is the main weapon we must use in the future since it is difficult for our men outside to get to us."

"Please have the live phosphorus delivered to our men in the Student Directorate, Alpha 66, or Comando L," the letterwriter continues. "They know how to get it to us."

A letter from Bayamo, Oriente, says:

"In Bayamo, over 2,200 acres of rice and several storage warehouses were set on fire on Feb. 21. Five Russians were shot to death on Feb. 22 as they returned from a party in Baïre. They were part of the personnel working in the E. Pepu caves at Los Negros, near Jiguani."

And an underground leader reports from Havana:

"The Bohemia magazine building was set on fire by its own employes. Heads of many vigilante committees here are resigning in fear of reprisals."

Further indication of the mounting resistance to Castro is the mounting terror. Thus a woman from the town of Bolondron tells of visiting the cemetery to pray at her family plot during Easter:

"While I knelt there I saw a truck loaded with bags pull up before an open trench. Soldiers dragged the bags off, opened them, and dumped out the bodies of men and boys killed in Bolondron, into a mass grave. Later, I learned that 22 had been slaughtered. Bolondron is experiencing a bloodbath. Besides those the Communists buried, others were interred in nearby Union de Reyes."

(Ed. Note: Phosphorus is widely used in Cuba as an incendiary agent to burn crops, and as an explosive to make hand grenades and booby traps employed against Government forces.)

#

URBAN POPULATION RESISTS CANE-CUTTING

The Cuban guajiro has refused to cut cane for the Castro regime. To fill that gap, so-called volunteer labor battalions have been recruited in the urban communities.

A recent series of cartoons in "Revolucion," a government organ, reveals the depth of disenchantment among these "volunteers." In a humorous but threatening manner, the regime let it be known that it is aware of tactics employed to slow down production in the sugar industry. The "volunteers" are shown as unwilling to arise early enough to catch the trucks to the cane fields. Upon arriving, they only half load the cane carts, are "careless," and are sullen about it all.

A radio conversation between a "volunteer" working in Camaguey Province, with his mother in Havana, is revealing. He was permitted to talk over the official shortwave network because his wife had been taken to a hospital for an operation. The exchange, intercepted in Miami, disclosed that he had not been permitted to notify his family that he was leaving town or where he was going. He had been away 13 days without communication with his home. The "volunteer" was turned up in Camaguey after an intensive search by his mother.

#

INSIDE LATIN AMERICA

SUBVERSION IN COLOMBIA

"Cuban Communist subversion in Latin America is increasing, both in the scope of its operations and in the number of Latin Americans who are being given guerrilla warfare training in Cuba," reports the Cuban Student Directorate in Exile.

The Directorate, which has accurately gathered intelligence from Cuba and Latin America in the past, has provided Free Cuba News with detailed information on subversion in Colombia.

"Groups of Colombian students leave for special sabotage and guerrilla training in Cuba every month," the Directorate reveals.

The students are recruited by Manlio Lafont, editor of the Colombian Communist Party weekly La Voz de Democracia (The Voice of Democracy), and the Communist leader Luis Emiro Valencia. The trips are organized by La Vuelta del Mundo (Around the World) travel agency in Bogota.

... .. take the 'tourists' to Curacao," the Directorate reports,
• "where they are picked up by special Cubana Airlines planes."

The Communists have organized a guerrilla force in Colombia with more than 100 instructors trained in Cuba as cadres for the Colombian insurgents. The Red guerrillas are believed to number more than 1,600 and they are organized into 13 groups. The Directorate gives this breakdown of their organization:

<u>Territorial Area</u>	<u>Number of Groups</u>	<u>Strength</u>
1. Cauca	3	500 men
2. Cundinamarca	4	105 men
3. Tolima	3	434 men
4. Meta	1	unknown
5. Huila	2	90 men

#

HOUSE UNIT STRESSES SUBVERSION PERIL

The Subcommittee on Inter-American Affairs of the House of Representatives recently issued a report on "Castro Communist Subversion in the Western Hemisphere" which said in part:

"Castro has stepped up his campaign to exploit indigenous nationalist and ultra-leftist movements in behalf of his own subversive aims in Latin America. Infiltration of political, social, and economic movements remains a primary Communist tactic in carrying out subversive activities in the various nations of the hemisphere

"Testimony given the subcommittee by top intelligence officials of the United States established that from 1,000 to 1,500 Latin Americans traveled to Cuba last year for ideological and paramilitary training. The number of trainees is increasing in 1963."

ILLEGIB

